

**Update on the Stimson Forestlands Conservation Project
Troy-Lake Creek Properties**
September 1st, 2011

Basics

Owner: Stimson Lumber Company (privately-held family corporation)

Acreage: ~28,000 acres (see associated map)

Location: Lake Creek, O'Brien Creek, Ruby Creek, Kootenai River; near Troy MT

Purpose/Objective: Maintain lands as sustainable working forests

Proposal: Place a conservation easement over the lands, which would prohibit subdivision and development while allowing for continued forest management; FWP would be the easement holder and Stimson Lumber would continue to own and manage the lands

Benefits: Maintains local forest-based jobs that contribute to local economy

Maintains recreation opportunities on affected and adjacent lands

Protects wildlife, fisheries, and other natural resources of the properties and adjacent lands

Conserves scenic and cultural resources of the properties

Maintains forestland tax base

Limits provision of local services to potential development in rural areas

Complements objectives of State Assessment of Need and Statewide Assessment

Response Strategy

Potential funding sources: USDA-Forest Service Forest Legacy Program (FLP); working forests

USF&WS Section 6 Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP); T&E species

Bonneville Power Administration (BPA); fisheries mitigation

Stimson Lumber Company

Timeframe: Estimated project completion in 2012

Update

Funding: FLP – Application submitted (July 2010) for FY-12 for \$6.5 million is ranked #6 nationally and included in President's Budget at \$6.5 million; Congress has yet to act on this, but we are hoping for direction by November 2011

– FY-12 application was re-submitted (July 2011) for FY-13 as a placeholder, pending Congressional action on the FY-12 budget

HCP – Application submitted (January 2011) for FY-11 budget for \$4.0 million;

USF&WS awarded full funding of the application to MT FWP (August 2011)

BPA – Application not yet developed/submitted due to uncertainties of other funding, but still anticipated

Stimson – Still a willing seller and contributor

Title: Further investigation of title has been pursued with updated report in September 2010, which addressed ownership and areas of retained or severed minerals; additional specific inquiry/research on mineral estate

Minerals: A minerals report and remoteness test was completed (October 2010), which identified any Stimson parcels in areas of mineral potential subject to surface disturbance and three areas were identified (see map); there was particular emphasis applied where mineral rights were severed (in other ownership); any needed further investigation will be completed to satisfy the requirements of conservation easements, the FLP, and the US Treasury

Community Support: Presented information on conservation easement proposal to Lincoln County Commission and to Lincoln County Planning Board (November 2010); scheduled to provide update to Commission in September 2011

Access: Continue to address motorized/non-motorized access issue on Ruby Loop Road with all parties; letter to Commission in December 2010; scheduled to provide update to Commission in September 2011

List of identified supporters: (as of 7-9-2010)

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
Kootenai National Forest
US Fish and Wildlife Service
Vital Ground Foundation
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
American Wildlands
Libby Rod & Gun Club
The Nature Conservancy of Montana
Montana Wildlife Federation
Yaak Valley Forest Council
Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee
Troy Shooting Club
Bull Lake Rod & Gun Club (verbal)
Kootenai Forest Stakeholders Coalition

(additional as of 7-31-11)

Kootenai River Development Council
Boone & Crockett Club
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
Montana Audubon
Kootenai Tribe of Idaho
The Trust for Public Land
Society of American Foresters, Libby Chapter
Ed Levert
Tom Jones
Jerry Akin
Kris Newgard and Eric Dickinson
Jim Benedict
John and Kathy Mohar
Steve Tralles

Conservation easement: Work on draft of specific terms has been delayed due to funding delay; will begin as soon as principal funding is determined and FWP has authority to proceed with project
FWP MEPA process: Formal authority to proceed granted by FWP Commission (August 2011); will begin in Fall 2011